

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 39

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 131

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 39—Relative to the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act.

[Filed with Secretary of State September 23, 1997.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 39, Thomson. Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act.

This measure would respectfully memorialize the Congress of the United States to enact Legislation to reauthorize the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act in a manner that accomplishes prescribed objectives.

WHEREAS, The passage of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) in 1991 represented a watershed event in the evolution of federal transportation policy; and

WHEREAS, The reauthorization of ISTEA is expected to be adopted by the United States Senate and House of Representatives later this year; and

WHEREAS, All members of California's Congressional delegation have created a caucus which has advocated on behalf of California and its interests during the ISTEA reauthorization process; and

WHEREAS, Several proposals are currently being considered by the United States Senate and House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, In considering these proposals for reauthorizing ISTEA, the federal government is evaluating numerous factors for calculating the distribution of federal Highway Trust Fund moneys; and

WHEREAS, Each of these proposals contain some provisions that will be fiscally beneficial to California, and some provisions that will be fiscally detrimental to California; and

WHEREAS, Current federal program categories limit the flexibility of the states with regard to the manner in which the states may spend their funding; and

WHEREAS, The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program has proven to be effective at improving air quality in California given the state's substantial air quality improvement needs despite the current funding limitation on the program for large states; and

WHEREAS, California has traditionally been a "donor" state, having received on average over the six-year authorization of ISTEA just 91 percent of the amount California provided in gas tax revenues

to the Highway Account of the federal Highway Trust Fund over that period; and

WHEREAS, Recent projections estimate that, within the next two years, international trade will account for 25 percent of California's economy, and intermodal goods movement as a result of international trade places a significant burden on the state's transportation infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative that the federal government place a high priority on providing transportation funding for the heavy infrastructure needed to advance the nation's competitiveness in accommodating the growing international trade shipped through the nation's ports, airports, and border crossings; and

WHEREAS, California has been compelled to divert hundreds of millions of dollars from county, street, and road allocations to pay for border infrastructure improvements needed as a result of increased commercial and industrial traffic caused by the North American Free Trade Agreement; and

WHEREAS, Local and regional transit systems are indispensable to the daily transportation needs of millions of Californians; and

WHEREAS, California has recently enacted welfare reform legislation that is expected to result in a significant increase in transportation and transit needs of new workers leaving welfare; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly and Senate of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature of the State of California memorializes the Congress of the United States to enact legislation to reauthorize ISTEA in a manner that ensures more flexibility for states in spending Highway Trust Fund moneys, increases the amount of funding designated for the CMAQ program and removes the current limitations on CMAQ allocations to larger states, guarantees that each state receives at least 95 percent of its contribution to the Highway Account of the federal Highway Trust Fund each year, provides adequate funding to reflect the level of intermodal activity in each state, and allocates funding to offset the cost of local improvements to California's border infrastructure needed as a result of the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement, ensures consistent funding support for transit, and reflects support at the highest funding level possible for discretionary welfare-to-work transportation access programs; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, to each member of the United States House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, each member of the United States Senate Committee

on Environment and Public Works, and each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States.

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